

# A Memorial Sign Ceremony to Honor Fallen Officer Francis Ryan



Cpl./2 Robert Colmery, Sgt. Richard Bratz, Ms. Eleanor Allione, Col. Nathaniel Mc Queen, Jr., Breanna Prentice (great great grand niece); grand nieces: Dianne McMinds, Karen Dougherty, Colleen Stein; great grand niece Colleen Dougherty (daughter of Steve & Lori); Grand niece Lori Dougherty and husband Steve Dougherty; Fred McMinds husband of Dianne (grandfather to Breanna), Cpl./3 Joseph Thuet, and Cpl./3 Jeffrey Hale

Presented by the Director of Public Information Sergeant Richard D. Bratz

*Wilmington* – Today at 9:00 a.m., the Delaware State Police honored Officer Francis Ryan at a Public Servants Memorial

Sign Ceremony. The ceremony was held on Philadelphia Pike at East Holly Oak Road, Wilmington.

Officer Francis Ryan, a member of the Delaware State Highway Police, died at the age of 31 while attempting to apprehend a speeding motorist on Philadelphia Pike on October 17, 1922. Officer Ryan's motorcycle was struck by a vehicle traveling in the opposite direction in the area of East Holly Oak Road. He was taken to a local doctor for immediate treatment before being transported to the Delaware Hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries on November 2, 1922.

*"I want to thank everyone in attendance for your willingness to take the time from your busy schedules to be here this morning. I especially want to thank the state officials and the state policemen who are here this morning to commemorate Francis Ryan's service to the State of Delaware. My name is Lori Dougherty. I am one of four grandnieces of Francis Paul Ryan who are here with our families today. My three sisters Karen, Diane, Colleen and I are all very honored and very grateful to see our great uncle Francis Ryan's sacrifice recognized in this manner.*

*While I was growing up my mother often told me the story of our paternal grandmother's brother, Francis Ryan. How he was a policeman and was the first to ride a motorcycle on the job...As a family, we will be forever grateful to Officer Lewis and all of the other officers and state officials who have taken part in making sure Officer Francis Ryan sacrifice has not been forgotten. Again, thank you to everyone whose hard work contributed to making this day possible..."*

***Lori Dougherty Grandniece of Officer Francis Ryan***

Dignitaries, Troopers, family, and friends gathered to remember Officer Francis Ryan who made the "Ultimate Sacrifice" in service to the State of Delaware.

The following offered remarks at the ceremony:

- Attorney General Matt Denn
- Robert Coupe, Secretary of the Delaware Department of Safety and Homeland
- Colonel Nathaniel McQueen, Jr., Superintendent of the Delaware State Police
- Lieutenant Thomas Brackin, Delaware State Troopers Association
- Lori Dougherty, grandniece of Officer Ryan





*"Since 2012, The Delaware State Police has held eight*

ceremonies throughout Delaware to honor our fallen Troopers as part of our Line of Duty Death Memorial Sign Program. This program was initiated to ensure that Memorial signs were dedicated at the crash locations for all Troopers who have died in the line of duty as a result of motor vehicle crashes since 1922.

It was discovered that only (four) of the 13 Troopers involved in fatal crashes had memorial signs dedicated. Working with DelDOT as part of the Public Servants Memorial Signage Program, a plan was initiated to dedicate nine more signs over the next few years. Since this program began, We have dedicated (4) memorial signs in New Castle County, (2), in Kent County, (1) in Sussex County and (1) just over the line in PA. Today's ceremony honoring Officer Francis Ryan now ensures that all (13) roadside memorial signs have been placed to honor our fallen Troopers.

These ceremonies have been about more than the dedication of memorial signs. These ceremonies have allowed us all to reflect upon the history of our heroes and our survivors. They have also confirmed that the history of the Delaware State Police is more than names and statistics. It is the story of human dedication, service and sacrifice. Today as we approach the 95th anniversary of his death we gather to honor the service and sacrifice of Officer Francis Ryan. Officer Ryan made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our Great State and we are grateful for this opportunity to recognize him with this memorial sign and affirm our promise that his sacrifice will never be forgotten."

**Colonel Nathaniel McQueen Jr. Superintendent of the Delaware State Police**





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